

MATTHEW H. MEAD
GOVERNOR



2323 Carey Avenue
CHEYENNE, WY 82002

Office of the Governor

August 17, 2018

Melissa Martin
Planning and Information Program Manager
2468 Jackson Street
Laramie, WY 82070

Dear Ms. Martin,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Medicine Bow National Forest (MBNF) Landscape Vegetation Analysis (LaVA) Project draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The mountain pine beetle epidemic has taken its toll on the MBNF and has significantly impacted forest conditions. It is imperative to expedite this landscape-scale analysis and implement vegetative treatments to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfires and restore forest health.

The MBNF has regularly engaged state and local cooperating agencies to inform the LaVA project draft EIS. I commend these efforts. I encourage you to continue them as the project progresses and treatment is implemented. State agencies have provided separate comments for the draft EIS that address those elements specific to their expertise. Agency comments should be considered as a decision is developed.

More must be done about the mountain pine beetle epidemic to mitigate its continued deadly effect. The recent Badger and Beaver Creek fires are a reminder of forest vulnerability due to unnaturally high fuel loads on the MBNF. Thank you for your efforts to ensure productive discourse to facilitate proactive hazardous fuels reduction and improve forest resiliency.

I look forward to continuing to work with you. Please reach out to Beth Callaway if you have any questions: beth.callaway@wyo.gov or 307-777-8204.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew H. Mead".

Matthew H. Mead
Governor

MHM:dp

cc: The Honorable Michael B. Enzi, U.S. Senate
The Honorable John Barrasso, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Liz Cheney, U.S. House of Representatives
Brian Ferebee, Regional Forester, Rocky Mountain Region
Melissa Martin, Project Manager, Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests